GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2413
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2001
VISIT OF IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER
SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the India and Iran are planning to institute a mechanism to enable the scholars from both the countries to study issues of strategic concern;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this proposal was discussed during the recent visit of Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran;

(d) if so, the modalities chalked out between the two countries in this regard; and

(e) the details of other issues discussed with the Iranian Foreign Minister?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a)-(d) The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses(IDSA) of India and Institute of Political and International Studies, (IPIS) of Ira periodically hold discussions on issues that are of strategic importance for both India and Iran. Both Institutes have thus far held two rounds of discussions, one each in August1999 and August 2000. The third round of discussions is scheduled to be held in later this month. As a follow-up to the decision taken during EAM`s meeting with the Iranian Foreign Minister on April, 10, 2001, the forthcoming round of discussions between IDSA and IPIS is likely to discuss the strategic issues as well.

(e) The first India-Iran Dialogue on Strategic issues was held in New Delhi on 16th October, 2001. The Indian delegation to this dialogue was led by Foreign Secretary and the Iranian delegation by their Deputy Foreign Minister. During this meeting, the two sides focused on the regional and international security perspectives, and the phenomena of terrorism and fundamentalism. In this context, the two sides held detailed discussions on the emerging political situation in Afghanistan. The meeting contributed to better understanding of each other`s legitimate concerns in the region, particularly in Afghanistan.

The two sides also held a Review Meeting of the India-Iran Joint Commission and took stock of entire range of issues of bilateral cooperation between the two countries, including political, economic, commercial, cultural, consular and those related to the work of India-Iran Joint Committee on the transfer of Iranian gas to India.